

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /083 W
----- 084938

R 171216Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1734

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L 2243

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OTRA, FR, VS

SUBJECT: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TRAN VAN DON IN KINSHASA

REF: (A) SAIGON 2493; (B) SAIGON 2558

1. VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR KIM LONG CALLED MARCH 14 TO SAY
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER VAN DON WISHED CALL ON ME BUT
READILY AGREED TO MY CALLING ON HIM AT LONG'S RESIDENCE.

2. DON SAID HE HAD CARRIED LENGTHY SUBSTANTIVE MESSAGE FROM
THIEU TO MOBUTU AND IN DISCUSSIONS HAD TAKEN SOFT APPROACH
STRESSING SAIGON'S DESIRE FOR PEACE PURSUANT PARIS ACCORDS.
HE HAD DRAWN ATTENTION TO RECENT STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT
THIEU TO EFFECT IT TIME FOR COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION TO CONVENE. HE HAD SAID SOUTH VIETNAM
PREPARED FOR RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT ANY PRECONDITIONS.
HE INDICATED BELIEF THAT HANOI MIGHT BE ATTRACTED SINCE
FOR THEM COMMITTEE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WAS STEP
TOWARD COALITION GOVERNMENT WHILE FOR SAIGON IT WAS
STEP COMPATIBLE WITH PARIS AGREEMENTS. HE, HE DON, HAD
NOT MENTIONED HANOI OR PRG. (INDEED IN TELEVISION
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INTERVIEW WHEN ASKED HOW TO EXPLAIN FIGHTING IN COURSE--A

FAT BALL I THOUGHT HE COULD KNOCK OUT THE PARK--
TO MY AMAZEMENT HE DUCKED ANSWER TO QUESTION AND TALKED
ABOUT SAIGON'S INTEREST IN PEACEFUL SOLUTION.)

3. MOBUTU, HOWEVER, TOLD HIM OF RECENT VISITS PRG AND
TALKS WITH NORTH VIETNAMESE AND TO MOBUTU AND FOREIGN
MINISTER BULA HE EXPLAINED THAT ARTICLE 9 OF 12-GOVERNEMTN
AGREEMENT OF PARIS MADE CLEAR THAT SIGNATURE PARIS ACCORDS
DID NOT CONSTITUTE RECOGNITION OF PRG.

4. DON SAID THAT AS ONE GENERAL TO ANOTHER HE HAD DISCUSSED
MILITARY SITUATION WITH MOBUTU USING MAPS. APPARENTLY HE
EXPLAINED DIFFICULTY OF DEFENSE WHEN ICC WAS IN SAIGON
WATCHING EVERY COUNTERTHRUST SAIGON MADE BUT WAS HELPLESS
TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT ENEMY OFFENSIVES.

5. DON SAID HE HAD WANTED TO AVOID DISCUSSION OF
COMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL SITUATION AND THUS HAD REPEATEDLY
USED FORMULA OF RESPECTING POLITICAL "STATUS QUO." IF
MOBUTU BUYS THIS, IT MEANS CONTINUED ZAIRIAN RELATIONS
WITH NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM WHILE ACCEPTANCE OF THESIS
THAT PRG IS INTERNAL PROBLEM IN SOUTH. MOBUTU DID
NOT SAY NO, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME THAT HE AGREED
EITHER.

6 MOBUTU AND DON ALSO DISCUSSED CAMBOIDA SITUATION.
DON QUOTED MOBUTU AS SAYING FALL OF LON NOL GOVERNMENT
WOULD BE SERIOUS DEVELOPMENT FOR MALAYSIA AND THAILAND
WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT IT WOULD HAVE LITTLE SHORT-RUN
IMPACT ON MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

7. DON AGREED TO MOBUTU REQUEST THAT SOUTH VIETNAM SUPPLY
FRENCH-SPEAKING PROFESSORS FOR ZAIRIAN SCHOOLS. WE ALL
HOPE THIS WILL SUFFICE TO HOLD MOBUTU TO STATUS QUO
FORMULA. (SAIGON WILL NOT THAT DON AND LONG FINESSED
REPORTED MFA REQUEST TO CLARIFY QUESTION OF GOZ RECOGNITION OF PRG.
SEE PARA 6 REFTTEL B.) DON GOT STANDARD TREATMENT FOR
HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS--MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, TRIP TO
INGA, ETC., AND PRIVATE DINNER WITH FOREIGN MINISTER.
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